UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Radio Service

OFFICE OF INFORMATION

YOUNG FOLKS' PROGRAM

Friday, Jan. 6.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

SUBJECT: Trees in Winter.

ANNOUNCEMENT: There's Uncle Abe of the United States Department of Agriculture and his nephew, Jim. They're taking a walk through the woodlot. Let's catch up with them, and find out what they are up to.

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UNCLE ABE: Oh, boy, I love to be out here in the winter air! The woods look good to me at this time of the year! Don't you think so, Jim?

JIM: The trees look too bare to me. I like the summer time, when you can see the leaves, and tell something about the trees.

UNCLE ABE: Why, this is the time of the year to really see trees. Now that the leaves are gone, their shapes or outlines stand out more clearly --- Look at those two trees there --- Do you notice any difference in them?

JIM: They don't both branch the same way.

UNCLE ABE: That's it. Trees like the larch there, or the pin oak have trunks that run straight up to the tip of the tree with branches growing out from the sides. But you notice that elm has a main stem that divides into a number of big branches.

JIM: Most trees to divide into big branches that way --- that is, most all of them except the evergreen trees.

UNCLE ABE: Yes, that branching form is most common among the trees that shed their leaves. Another thing I want you to notice is the bark. You will find it is a lot different on the trunks and branches of different kinds of trees. In fact, you will find the bark different on old trees and young ones of the same species, and even on the branches and trunk of the same tree.

In some trees, like the hornbean and beech, the bark is hard and smooth. In others, like the ash or chestnut, you'll notice the bark has deep furrows in it. Or take the shagbark hickory. Its bark, you'll notice, flakes off in loose plates. Now the paper birch bark breaks into brittle strips. Yellow poplar and cork elm bark gets ridged and corky. You can often tell a tree by the color of the bark, too. Take, for instance, the white, brown, pink and yellow of the different birches. The white oak gets its name from the color of the bark which is light gray ------

JIM: I can tell the sycamore by its bark. Sycamore bark is gray or brown and it breaks off in thin pieces leaving lighter colored patches.

UNCLE ABE: Yes, and you can tell the bark of some trees by its taste or smell.. For instance, the bark of the cherry, the slippery elm, the mockernut hickory and the sassafras.

JIM: The honey locust has thorns on its branches. I can tell a honey locust when I see it.

UNCLE ABE: Yes, and you'll notice that its bean-like fruit clings to its branches all winter long. It is the same way with the fruit of the sycamore, the catalpa, and the apulownia. The yellow poplar, or the tulip tree, also sometimes holds its fruit until well into winter. Even after that, you can see the empty cups standing upright on the tree.

JIM: You can sometimes tell oak trees by the dried leaves. They sometimes cling on for a long time.

UNCLE ABE: Another way to tell trees is by their buds. Some of the winter buds are slender. Other are flat, or oval, or pointed, or sticky or rough. The buds of some trees are covered with scales, while those of other trees are naked. They differ in color, too, from pale yellow to inky black. The horse chestnut has a big, brown bud covered with a gummy stuff. The beech has reddish-brown, pointed buds, while the buds of the red maple are rounded and red. Sugar maple buds are pointed and brown in color. Buds, you know, have complete little branches inside them. In spring they develop into a new crop of twigs. Take this horse-chestnut twig. When we get in the house we'll put it in water and let it stand in a warm room. Then you will soon see the buds get fatter and fatter. Finally they will open. The soft little green leaves will come out of their winter wrappings.

Now that there no leaves on the branches, you have a good chance to find out what is happening among the trees in the woods.

JIM: What is happening?

UNCLE ABE: Look up. Notice how the tops of the trees spread out. You see the big trees have pushed upward, trying to get ahead of each other, so they can spread their crowns where their leaves can get the light needed for more growth when they come out in the spring. Here in the woods, you notice, how high the trunks run up without branches. If these same trees had been grown in the open, they would have developed wide, spreading crowns. Their lower branches would have grown out from the trunks much nearer the ground. Trees like that don't make the best lumber -- too knotty. ----- Now look there. See that opening in the overhead cover where those trees have been cut out. Notice how thick the brush is underneath that opening. That brush is just baby trees fighting for a place in the sunlight. Some of those trees must have come from seed scattered by the older trees. But look at those sprouts growing out of that stump. Those sprouts have the advantage over the seedlings. They have the root power of a big tree. They will probably grow much faster than the seedlings. They may overtop the seedlings, so that the seedlings will die for lack of light. Yes, Jim, trees by themselves or growing together in the woods are interesting at any season of the year. But sometimes it is much easier to

see just what is happening in the winter than it is in the summer. Winter is also a good time for the farmer to work in his woodlot. He has more spare time then, to improve his woods.

JIM: How you mean "improve" his woods?

UNCLE ABE: Well, cutting out the dead, defective trees. Or cutting down those that are undesirable, those that interfere with his getting the best results from his timber crop. Winter is also a good time for estimating, measuring, and cutting the timber that has reached its best growth to sell. You can plant this in your mind, Jim, winter is a good time to learn about trees.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Radio Service

OFFICE OF INFORMATION

PROGRAM YOUNG FOLKS PROGRAM RELEASE Fri., Jan. 13, 1933

SUBJECT: The Forest Ranger.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

ANNOUNCEMENT: Hello, Uncle Abe! How's everything at the Department of Agriculture ---Your nephew, Jim, was asking about you this morning--- "Where is he"--- Why, right over there in the woodlot--- seems to be building a fire---- Come on, let's see what he is up to now ----- He's always glad to see us Uncle Abe anyway---

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JIM: Hello, Uncle Abe!

UNCLE ABE: Hello, Jim! What are you doing here? -- Playing forest ranger?

JIM: --n-n-no, I was just playing like I was camping--- That does a forest ranger do, anyway, Uncle Abe?

UNCLE ABE: What don't forest rangers do, you mean. Rangers have plenty to do. They are the men, who under a Forest Supervisor, look after our National Forests. Since we have 109 Forests, covering 138 million acres, you know it must take brains and work to do it. The Forest Rangers must be on to their jobs. Our National Forests were created primarily for the protection and to provide for a future supply of timber, but there are a lot of other uses of the Forests.

JIM: But just what do the forest rangers do?

UNCLE ABE: Well, a forest ranger must not only fight forest fires and see that timber is cut so there will also be crops of timber to be cut in the years to come, but he must build roads, bridges, trails, string telephone lines. Among other duties, he must count sheep and cattle entering the Forest, and see that grazing privileges are not abused.----- Move over there, Jim. Let me sit down on this log with you and I'll tell you more about forest rangers. I spent a day once going with a forest ranger.

JIM: Tell me everything you did, Uncle Abe?

UNCLE ABE: Well, this time I'm talking about, I spent the night at Ranger Smith's little log cabin. That house was far back in the western mountains; so far back that you could never even hear the echo of a train whistle.

Before sun-up next morning, we were out saddling the horses and strapping on the packs for a long ride over the forest trails.

JIM: Where were you going?

UNCLE ALE: Well, first thing Ranger Smith had to count was a band of sheep. You know, ranchers are allowed to graze sheep and cattle in the National Forests under certain conditions; so we had to ride all the way to the boundary of the Forest. We found the herder with his band of sheep waiting for the Ranger to count them as they entered the Forest. After the last of the sheep had been counted, the Ranger said to the herder:

"Remember, Pete, keep the band spread out, so the woolies won't hurt the grass and young saplings by trampling. And remember, too, that the same bed ground must not be used too often. The forage, like everything else on the National Forest, is to be used but not abused."

With that, we moved off down the trail to the next job --- a sale of railroad ties in a body of mature timber where Pine District meets Eagle District, which was covered by a Ranger named Tuck. Ranger Tuck was already on the spot when we got there and had made good progress in counting and inspecting the ties, which the buyer wanted to haul to the railroad the next morning. You know, railroads use a million and a half cross-ties in a single year and it takes lots of trees for all those ties. Many of the trees grown on the National Forest are sold for cross-ties. I wish you could have seen those two Rangers work. They stamped and measured the ties so fast and so accurately that it was easy to see that they had plenty of experience doing it. Why, at noon they had marked the last tie and we were all ready to eat. A Ranger always packs his kitchen with him; that is, he always packs his "grub" and frying pan. So Ranger Smith built a little fire against a rock and away from anything that might catch fire. Pretty soon we had fried bacon and heated beans and coffee.

As soon as we were through, Ranger Smith and Ranger Tuck packed their kits. Tuck went his way and we went ours, which led us to a mountain stream where a crew of men were beginning to build a bridge. The bridge was a necessary part of a new road to open up the higher country of the Forest to tourists and Ranger Smith had to show the gang how high to build the bridge to make it safe against high waters caused by melting snow and heavy rains in the spring. He not only gave them his opinion but lent a helping hand in hauling the bridge timbers into place. You see, Jim, a ranger has to be somethin' of an engineer as well as a lumberman.

It was getting late and Ranger Smith had to post new fire signs on the mountain, to warn tourists about being careful with fire. We pushed on up a steep trail stopping now and then to nail a sign in a conspicuous spot. After posting the last sign in the pack, we turned again home. Just then the horses snorted uneasily. Ranger Smith's trained eye caught a faint wisp of smoke curling up toward the evening sky. It was fire -- the biggest danger to our forests. As fast as our horses could make their way down the winding trail, we rushed toward the smoke. "We're in luck" said the Ranger. "What do you mean, 'luck', I asked. "I believe we got here in time for me to do this job without help."

Quickly he unstrapped the long-handled shovel from the pack, the shovel the Forest Rangers carry for just such emergencies. With quick, sure strokes Ranger Smith started a trench around the fire, throwing the fresh earth on the

burning brush. The sun went down but we worked. Finally Smith, hot, tired, and sweaty was satisfied that the last spark was out. We had probably saved many acres of timber from destruction.

"A camp fire caused this," said the Ranger, "And I'm going to find out who left it---when I do, he and the Judge will have a quiet little chat."

JIM: Then Forest Rangers are firemen and policemen as well as lumbermen and engineers?

UNCLE ABE: Oh, yes. Fires are the biggest danger to our forest. They destroy timber, kill the wild game, and sometimes trap folks in the forest. Fire fighting is one of the biggest jobs of the rangers, but I'll tell you some of the more exciting things about rangers some other time. What I saw was all in the day's work with a ranger. Let's go in the house.

JIM: Come on, I'll beat you in. I'm hungry!

UNCLE ABE. Just a minute, there, Jim. Not so fast. Don't leave that camp fire burning. You might start a young forest fire even here in the woodlot. Always put out a fire thoroughly before you leave it.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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YOUNG FOLKS' PROGRAM Fri., Jan. 20/28

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SUBJECT: Shoes and Farm Hides

ANNOUNCEMENT: What is Uncle Abe doing there? Oh, I see, he is helping Jim select a new pair of shoes. Jim is trying on the shoes and Uncle Abe is giving him some good advice about which kind to take. Uncle Abe, you know, is from the Department of Agriculture and knows about the selection and care of leather shoes. Let's hear what he has to say to Jim.

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UNCLE ABE: No --- Try on the other pair.

JIM: But, Uncle Abe, I like these better. They are niftier looking.

UNCLE ABE: Stand up, and I will show you what is wrong with them. Shoes, you know, should always be fitted with the entire weight of the body on the feet.

JIM: Why, Uncle Abe?

UNCLE ABE: Well, when you are standing on them, your feet are then at their largest. You can not get around the fact that five toes need a certain space of a certain general shape if they are to spread out naturally and comfortably. When you jam your feet into pointed, narrow shoes, they are pretty sure to be cramped, twisted, and maybe finally deformed. Your toes may be buckled and piled one on another and the bones bent ---- Now look at that shoe!

JIM: What's the matter with it?

UNCLE ABE: Put your feet together. Let the heels touch. --- No. Keep your feet together. Get the toes as near together as you can and still keep the heels touching--- just like I have mine.

JIM: Like that?

UNCLE ABE: Yes. Shoes of correct shape are broad and round at the toe and straight along the inner edge. A pair of normal feet put together touch at the heels and also from just in back of the big joints of the big toes up to the ends of the toes. The inner edges of the soles of your shoes should do the same. --Look how far out toward the ends my shoes fit together -- then look at those you have on.---See how the inner edges curve away from each other. That is a bad shape. Do those shoes hurt?

JIM: Just a little; but they will be all right when I get them broken in.

UNCLE ABE: New shoes, if they fit you, should be comfortable from the start. They do not need "breaking in". Those are not the right shape anyway. If you wore unnatural shaped shoe like those long, you might have enlarged joints and bunions ---- Try on the other pair. Young feet are easily twisted and bent out of shape by shoes that do not fit. You know, Jim, it's an old saying that an "Army is only as good as its feet!" For that reason the United States War Department worked out the type of shoe worn by the United States soldiers and Army nurses. Army shoes are broad and round at the toe and straight along the inner edge. You can get civilian shoes made the same way. Those you are now putting on look like they were built right --

JIM: The soles of these are pretty thick -----

UNCLE ABE: Well, everyday shoes need soles that are at least moderately thick. Thick soles give you more protection against sharp rocks and things and also against water and slush.

JIM: My Daddy says that no matter how thick the shoes are, I seem to wear them out in a hurry.

UNCLE ABE: You tell that Daddy of yours that shoes of the proper design and fit are easier on his pocketbook, than some he has been buying you. Shoes that fit keep their shape and looks better and wear longer ------

JIM: Sometimes my shoes wear out a whole lot quicker than at others. Some shoes are much better than others?

UNCLE ABE: Oh, yes. But when the soles on a pair of shoes wear out in an unreasonably short time it may be because they were cut from belly leather. Leather from the belly section of an animal's hide is soft and flabby, it makes the poorest wearing soles.---By the way, you tell your Daddy that he can find out how to select and care for shoes from the Department of Agriculture. Tell him to write for Farmers' Bulletin No. 1523. It will tell him how to clean, and repair, oil and grease and waterproof shoes as well as how they are made. It might save him money. Can you remember that?

JIM: Farmer's Bulletin 1523.

UNCLE ABE: That's right. Maybe he is partly responsible for those shoes wearing out, too. He may be partly to blame for the poor leather.

JIM: How could he be? He doesn't make the shoes does he?

UNCLE ABE: No, but he sometimes sells hides, doesn't he?

JIM: Yes, Every once in awhile ---- Why?

UNCLE ABE: Well, country hides and skins make up about one-third of all the hides and skins produced in this country. They come from farms such as your Daddy's place. I was telling him the other day how farmers could get more for their hides.

JIM: How is that, Uncle Abe?

UNCLE ABE: Well, farmers would produce better hides and get better prices for them, if they would use more care in skinning, salting,and curing them. Skillful use of the skinning knife so as not to make cuts in the hide itself will help produce better hides. So will proper salting. If a hide is not promptly and properly thoroughly salted with plenty of good clean salt, it will spoil and makes poor wearing leather. Improper salting is another way to increase the cost of shoes. I was telling your Daddy about this the other day, and he wanted to know where he could get instructions on just how to skin and cure hides and skins. I couldn't remember the number of the bulletin in which the Department of Agriculture tells about that. Since then, I've looked it up.

JIM: Tell me the number, and I'll give it to him.

UNCLE ABE: It's Farmers Bulletin No. 1055. It tells how to get more money for better hides. It is called country hides and skins. Can you remember the number?

JIM: Sure No. 1055 and that one on the selection and care of leather shoes is No. 1523.

UNCLE ABE: That's right. Tell your Daddy to write for them. They will save him money.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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YOUNG FOLKS' PROGRAM Fri., Jan., 27/28

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SUBJECT: Fur Trappers and Farmers.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Here are Uncle Abe and his nephew, Jim, again---- Uncle Abe is from the Department of Agriculture; and he's full of stories, too. Whenever you see him around, you can be safe in guessing that that boy, Jim is not far off. Chances are Jim is trying to get Uncle Abe to tell him a story right now ----- Listen, and find out if I'm not right -------

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UNCLE ABE: Oh, yes, Jim, the fur trade is still flourishing in the Arctic; and in many other out-of-the-way places. Trapping is still a special business in the far North-----

JIM: Do the trappers have exciting times now, like those you read about?

UNCLE ABE: Yes, I guess in many countries where fur traders go looking for pelts you can still freeze your feet or get your throat cut without half trying. ---But, of course, you know, Jim, the greatest trappers in the world are American farm boys.

JIM: Farm boys right here in the United States?

UNCLE ABE: Sure! The furs collected in the United States every year are worth about $60,000,000 to the fur trade. And Russia collects furs worth only half as much as this; and Canada a fourth.

JIM: Why is that? I though ----

UNCLE ABE: I know ---but take the Mississippi River basin. It is, and always has been, a great place for wild life. There is plenty of cover, plenty of water, and plenty of food.

JIM: But we don't have so many big game and big fur animals, do we?

UNCLE ABE: No, but the smaller fur bearers are those that furnish most of the fur, and they multiply fast here where their natural enemies have been killed off. Then too, we have more trappers, and our farm boys use better traps than those native trappers you read about.

JIM: But we get furs from other countries, too, don't we?

UNCLE ABE: Sure we do! I noticed not long ago, that in three months we imported furs from 55 different countries. Why, in a year's time, we use over one-hundred and fifty million rabbit skins alone.

JIM: What for?

UNCLE ABE: Well, about half of them go to make felt hats, like this one of mine here. The other half are used for fur coats and things. Many of the "leopard" and "sealskin" and "ermine" coats you see the girls wearing are really rabbit skins in disguise.

JIM: Are those Jack rabbits or Molly cotton-tails?

UNCLE ABE: Neither one. Jack rabbits and cotton-tails don't make good fur. They make good felt when mixed with other fur.

JIM: Well what fur animals do we trap here?

UNCLE ABE: Muskrats and skunks are among the most valuable. We also have beavers, foxes, 'possums, and 'coons. We take from fourteen to seventeen million muskrats each year.

Of course, you understand, Jim, these furs are worked over and put together and sometimes dyed and fixed up until they look very much different from the raw pelts. Cheap as well as expensive fur coats go through a large number of processes in the course of manufacture, and much of the work has to be done by hand. The fur workers are experts at their jobs and take pride in their work.

JIM: It looks to me that with all the fur coats you see, there soon wouldn't be any fur animals left to trap.

UNCLE ABE: That's right, Jim. And our fur-bearing animals are trapped out fast. The catch year before last was just about a fifth less than it was the year before that, and last year the catch was even smaller compared with the year before.

JIM: At that rate, the fur animals can't last long.

UNCLE ABE: If the farm boys and other trappers keep disregarding the fur laws and trapping out of season, more and more kinds of fur bearers will be so scarce it won't pay to take them. The fur catch probably won't be so big this season as it was last, because, for one thing, the flood in the Mississippi Valley killed off a lot of fur bearers.

JIM: Huh! --- That's always the way ---

UNCLE ABE: What do you mean?

JIM: I wanted to do some trapping, too. We may move where there are more wild animals; but now I guess they'll all be gone before I get a chance at them.

UNCLE ABE: Wise trapping is all right. If you trap in the proper season, you get furs at their best; but why don't you try fur farming instead of trapping?

JIM: Fur farming?

UNCLE ABE: Sure! Fox farming is a regular business these days. Practically all of the silver and black foxes used in the United States are raised on fox farms. Many places in States bordering on the Great Lakes have also been fenced and stocked with beavers and muskrats. Minks too are being raised for fur. And rabbit farming is being carried on quite extensively in the West, especially in southern California. They raise rabbits for both fur and meat. Some rabbits are being raised in the Eastern States, too. The chances are good that rabbit growing will be more and more important as years go on.

You know, the Bureau of Biological Survey has a fur-animal experiment station in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains in New York State. Experts at that station are making a study of foxes and other fur animals there.

JIM: What do they find out?

UNCLE ABE: Oh, they've found out quite a number of things. For instance, they have demonstrated that to produce good fur you must have good fur-bearers to start with. Foxes with poor pelts even mated to foxes with superior fur keep on producing offspring with poor fur. At that station they are also studying the effect of food and feeding methods on the quality of the fur.

JIM: That's a lot like ordinary livestock farming.

UNCLE ABE: Sure. There's a good bit more to fur farming than just keeping fur animals in captivity. Fur farming is fur farming.